

It Begins With Hello

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It Begins With Hello

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Summary

"Uzu, say hello to our new neighbors." His mother said gently. Uzu finally directed his curious gray eyes over to the girl with the red streak in her hair.

His fingers fumbled to grab a hold onto his mother's skirt as he tried to hide behind her leg. On the other side of his mom was his older brother, seeming rather aloof about the entire situation.

His gray eyes peered at the two girls in front of him. One with the short dark hair, a single red streak in her hair and blue, gear shaped eyes. Another girl, just slightly older than the other girl, with long black hair and blue eyes.

The younger girl glanced over at him and his brother a little unsurely, the girl clinging onto her father's white coat.

He faintly registered his mother introduce his older brother to the girl and her father when he suddenly felt his mother place her hand on the back of his head, causing him to look up at her.

"Uzu, say hello to our new neighbors." She said gently. Uzu finally directed his curious gray eyes over to the girl with the red streak in her hair. He searched the girl, as though determining whether he should deem her friendly or not. Finally he parted from his mother with quick footsteps and ran to the little girl. She looked at him with alarmed eyes as he grabbed her free hand and pulled her away from her father. He spun around, still holding onto her hand and pulled her over to his side of the yard where the large tree was.

"Uzu? Where are you going?" His mother called to him. He didn't respond, too busy dealing with the girl, his new neighbor. Finally, they reached the tree and he silently pushed the girl towards the tree with insistent hands as she tried to resist.

She looked a little offended by the way he seemed to push her around. She frowned at him lightly before turning back to the tree. He guided her over to the side of the tree where wooden planks were nailed to the tree, like a makeshift ladder.

The girl hesitated in front of the ladder. She turned her head to see if she had her father's approval but the boy kept getting in the way of her vision, smiling at her and nodding. Finally, with slightly shaky hands, she climbed up the ladder, with the boy not too far behind her. She finally climbed into the tree house, a warm rug laid on the floor to protect her from the wooden planks. She sat near the ladder, unsure where to go until she spotted a stuffed monkey doll nearby. She crawled over to it and pulled it into her lap before she returned to her original spot.

Beside her, she found her neighbor's head pop up from the the hole in the floor where the ladder was located. He grinned up at her and moved to sit across from her. He smiled at her until he spotted the toy in her arms. "That's mine," he noted before looking back at her face.

She frowned, looking a little apologetic before she handed it back to him. He took it, but pushed it back into her arms. The girl looked at him, slightly confused. "It's okay. You can have it." He said. A small smile graced the girl's lips and she held the doll closer to her. Uzu took a deep breath before he finally spoke up.

"Hello!" He nearly shouted, causing the girl to look at him with alarm. It was a little obvious that he was nervous.

"I-I-I'm Uzu!" He held his hand out to her, determination flaring in his gray eyes as his cheeks dusted red.

The girl looked at him with surprised eyes, her eyes flitting back and forth between his face and his hand. Finally, she tentatively placed her hand in his, still slightly unsure about the green haired boy.

"Ryuko... I'm Ryuko." She said.

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"Hey Ryuko!" Uzu greeted as he bounded over to Ryuko, a sack lunch in his hand and his friends behind him. Ryuko looked up at her neighbor curiously, a little surprised to see a bunch of boys behind him. She was a fiery one and generally wasn't good at making friends since she was almost always fighting others. Her only real friend was Uzu, not that he seemed to mind.

Her sister, Satsuki, was almost always with her, but the elder sister wasn't anywhere in sight.

"Uzu..." She greeted a little hesitantly under the intense gazes of Uzu's friends.

"Mind if we sit with you, Ryuko?" Uzu asked, tilting his head to the side and noticing that she had the lunch table all to herself. Ryuko looked at the table and nodded before returning to munch on her croquette. Uzu smiled and turned to his friends with a nod before he took his spot right beside Ryuko.

In the middle of lunch, Ryuko got up to go to the restroom, whispering to Uzu that she'd be right back. "I'll be right here," he replied cheerily, his usual grin on his face.

When she walked away, Uzu's friends turned to him. "Hey, Uzu, why do we always sit with a Ryuko?" One boy with light blue hair asked.

"She's weird. She always fights other kids," one boy with blonde hair and amber eyes spoke up

Uzu looked at his friend, his brows contorted in confusion. "She's my friend, I like sitting with her." He replied. "And she's not weird." He said, furrowing his brows.

"Is she your girlfriend? Is that why you're always with her?" Another boy with tanned skin and blonde hair asked

Uzu cocked his head to the side, his brows furrowed in confusion. "Girlfriend? Well yeah, she's a girl and she's my friend... So she's my girlfriend, right?" He asked.

The boy with the blue hair smirked. "No, girlfriend, as in, you like, kiss each other and stuff." He teased. Uzu flushed a deep shade of red, his juice box nearly bursting from the tight grip of his hand.

"H-H-Huh? K-K-Kiss? Only a-adults d-do that stuff!" He rambled, embarrassed. His friends laughed before they cut themselves short just before Ryuko returned and reclaimed her seat, causing Uzu to tense up. Ryuko looked at him with confused eyes. "Uz-" she tried.

"You're not my g-g-g-girlfriend!" He squeaked, his face red, causing Ryuko to merely look at him with confused eyes as his friends burst into laughter.

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Ryuko's fingers danced across the screen of her phone as she sent a speedy text to Uzu, ignoring the way that Satsuki glanced at her curiously. The door opened as she sent the message and looked up to see Uzu's mother at the door. "Hello Mrs. Sanageyama," Ryuko and Satsuki greeted. Mrs. Sanageyama smiled and stepped aside to let Ryuko in.

"Hello, Ryuko. Uzu is in his room if you want to say hello," Ryuko nodded and smiled before shrugging her tote bag onto her shoulder and waved goodbye to her mother and sister.

"Bye mom, see you when you, dad, and Satsuki get back." She said before passing Mrs. Sanageyama and heading up the stairs to Uzu's room. Ryuko's and Satsuki's mother waved goodbye and turned back to Mrs. Sanageyama.

"Oh, is Satsuki not staying this time?" Mrs. Sanageyama asked.

Satsuki shook her head. "No, I'm interested to see what mother and father's business is like." She replied.

Ragyo, Ryuko and Satsuki's mother, nodded and turned Mrs. Sanageyama. "We'll be gone for about a week, thank you so much for watching her again," she said.

Mrs. Sanageyama smiled and nodded. "It's no problem at all," she replied.

Before Satsuki and Ragyo turned to leave, Ragyo whispered to her neighbor. "You let me know if anything happens between those two. My bet is that they'll get together when they reach high school," she chuckled under her breath.

Mrs. Sanageyama smirked. "That's not for another year. I think still think they'll get together sometime during their second year of high school," she whispered before Ragyo and Satsuki left.

"Hey," Ryuko greeted as she opened the door to Uzu's bedroom. She knew his house like the back of her hand. She always slept at his house since her parents always travelled for work and they didn't want her to stay home alone.

"Hey," Uzu greeted sleepily as he rolled onto his back to look at the girl in his room. "How long are you staying?" He asked as he scooted over to make room on his bed for Ryuko.

Ryuko dropped her bag by the door and closed the door behind her before she headed over to the bed. She plopped down beside him, curling into a ball as they both laid atop his bed.

covers.

"I'm staying for a week, hope that's alright." She replied sleepily.

Uzu nodded and yawned, his head resting beside Ryuko's. "It's.... No problem at all..." He muttered sleepily as they both drifted to sleep.

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"Hey," Uzu greeted as he sat down in the desk across from Ryuko. She looked up from her book, a smile on her face before her eyes returned to the pages in her book.

"Hi," she replied as she calmly turned a page. Uzu smiled, enjoying the silence between them as he watched her read. It was interesting to him, watching her read that is. It was a habit that she picked up from Satsuki since she was always reading.

Ryuko didn't read as much as Satsuki, but she did enjoy picking up a book or two occasionally.

Uzu propped his elbow up on the desk, cupping his chin with his hand. "What's the book about?" He asked quietly, unsure if she was really paying attention to his presence.

"It's about a girl who has a mysterious blade. She transfers to another school to find out who killed her father," she shares as she turns the page again.

"Hey, I've read that one before." Uzu said, a grin dancing on his lips. He really loved it when Ryuko told him about the books she was reading.

The dark haired girl eyed him curiously. "Really? You've read this book?" She asked in disbelief.

"Well, not the entire book, but it's pretty much the same thing when I read a summary of it online, right? Did you get to the part where you find out the killer is actually-" Ryuko reached across the table, clamping her hand over Uzu's mouth. The green haired male chuckled against her palm as Ryuko shot a glare at him.

"Don't." She warned, feeling Uzu grin against her palm. She pulled away and placed her bookmark in her book before closing it. She looked up to meet Uzu's gaze before putting her book away.

"Are you coming over today?" She asked, tucking some of her dark hair behind her ear. Uzu nodded, watching the way her fingers ran through her silky, dark hair.

"Mhmm," he hummed, smiling softly.

Ryuko nodded and looked down at her hands that were resting in her lap. "I'll see you later today then. We can work on homework or something, but I need to clean up a bit. Dad, Mom, and Satsuki are leaving later and I have to take care of Nui." She said.

Uzu nodded. "Right, your new baby sister. How is she? She's a year old now, right?" He asked.

Ryuko shook her head. "Almost a year, in a few more months she will be. She's good, usually well mannered and not too temperamental, but she is a little bratty. Although she doesn't seem to like being held..." Ryuko grumbled, her brows furrowing together.

Uzu nodded. "Well, each baby is different. Not all of them can be raised the same." He replied.

Ryuko smirked and looked up at him. "What are you? A baby guru?" She teased. The green haired male shrugged, a grin on his lips as Ryuko rolled her eyes.

Uzu shoved his hands in his pockets as he heard the faint sound of an infant crying through her front door. Ryuko pulled open the door, looking a little frantic. "Hey," he greeted. She shot him a smile before heading back toward the family room, mostly likely where Nui was crying.

"Hey, Uzu! Satsuki and my parents just left, come on in and close the door behind you!" She called as she tended to the baby. Uzu did as he was told, and took his shoes off and left them by the front door before he joined Ryuko in the family room.

She was standing in the center of the room, holding Nui in her arms as she tried to rock the crying infant. "Sorry, sorry, Nui is in a bad mood right-" she stopped, hearing the baby burp and gargle somewhat before the baby made a spitting noise and then continued crying again.

Ryuko was staring back at Uzu with wide eyes. The male grinned sheepishly as she pulled the baby away from her to check her shirt, around where her collar bone met her shoulder. She found a blob yellowish, white spit up staining her shirt. "Ugh..." She groaned as Uzu hurried over to her.

"Oh geez," he laughed and took Nui from Ryuko as she stared at the blob with distaste. "Um, go ahead and shower, I'll take care of Nui." Uzu said as he cradled the crying baby against his chest.

Ryuko looked at him unsurely. "Are you sure?" She questioned. Uzu nodded, smiling softly. "We'll be fine, won't we, Nui?" He cooed the last part to the baby who was still crying. Nui pushed Uzu's face away from hers, crying louder than before.

Uzu chuckled nervously. "See? Just fine!" Uzu insisted, causing Ryuko to eye him unsurely before she slipped away.

Ryuko came down, dressed in a new change of clothes and was greeted with silence. She looked around curiously only to find Uzu sitting on the couch, Nui asleep and cradled in his arms as he looked down at her, a tired sigh passing through his lips.

"Wow..." The dark haired girl spoke up, causing Uzu to look up at her in surprise. He grinned proudly and looked down at the infant. "Guess she got tired of crying..." He muttered as she approached him carefully. She looked down at Nui, quite surprised to see her baby sister fast asleep.

"Amazing." She breathed. "Want me to put her in the crib?" Ryuko offered.

"Sure," Uzu replied and allowed Ryuko to take Nui from his arms only for the baby to wake immediately and start crying.

Ryuko shushed her sister, rocking her in her arms. "Shoot, what did I do?" She asked as Uzu rose to his feet.

"Nothing, I don't know why she's crying..." He mumbled nervously as Ryuko handed her sister back to Uzu. As soon as Nui was back in Uzu's arms, she settled and drifted back to sleep, leaving the pair in awe.

"Are you serious?" Ryuko groaned as Uzu gave the girl a smug grin and sat back down on the couch, Nui once again cradled in his arms. "She won't let me hold her, but she'll let you... Someone she's seen only twice." She groaned and sat down beside Uzu.

"Guess kids just like me..." He whispered.

Ryuko nodded and her eyes flicked between Uzu and Nui before settling on the little girl. She leaned against Uzu's shoulder, watching her baby sister sleep. Ryuko's eyes flickered back to Uzu, noting the faint smile on his face before she turned back to Nui. "What if my own kids don't like me?" She whispered suddenly. Uzu turned to her with alarmed and confused eyes.

"You're pregnant?" He asked in disbelief.

Ryuko flushed and shook her head vigorously. "No idiot! I'm just saying... Like in the future or whatever when I'm married..." She murmured.

Uzu calmed down somewhat before nodding, his grin becoming teasing. "You want kids?"

The dark haired girl flushed and averted her gaze. "One day! M-Maybe, I don't know... I-It's something I think about...sometimes..." She mumbled, fiddling with her thumbs. Uzu chuckled and nodded as he turned to Nui, still sound asleep. "I'd like to have kids..." She whispered.

"I'm sure your kids will love you," he reassured and turned to her, his gray eyes meeting her blue ones.

Ryuko was speechless for a while, her eyes searching his for something they both weren't sure of. She opened her mouth to speak, but what she did next truly caught him off guard.

He felt her fingers on the back of his head, her fingers running through his green hair and massaging his scalp. She pulled him down slightly and she placed a soft kiss on his cheek. His eyes widened in bewilderment and he turned to her as she pulled away. Her hand returned to her lap and the two just stared at each other.

Finally, she averted her gaze and turned to Nui. Uzu slowly turned back to the infant as well, his head still spinning from the kiss.

"Tell anyone about that and I'll kick your ass," Ryuko said suddenly, causing Uzu to chuckle and nod in response.

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He watched as a guy, one of their classmates, stopped her in her tracks as she was making her way over to join him on the bench. The guy's face was beet red and he appeared nervous.

Uzu was too far away to hear their conversation, but he could piece together that the classmate was asking Ryuko to be his girlfriend but was turned down when the saddened expression crossed his face. The classmate departed with a nod and Ryuko made her way over to join Uzu.

He grinned at her. "Hey. What was that about?" He asked when Ryuko sat down beside him on the bench.

"Another boy asking me to be his girlfriend," she replied. Uzu felt his lips frown at hearing *another*. She looked up at him.

"Did you say yes?" Uzu asked, quickly wiping the frown off his face before she could see it.

She shook her head and looked down at her lap. "No, I told him it wouldn't work because I'm moving after we graduate." She replied and leaned back on her hands. "Not that I was interested or anything," she mumbled under her breath.

Uzu bit his lip and clenched his hands in his pockets. "You're moving," he stated, not asked. Beside him, he saw Ryuko nod her head in his peripheral. "When?" He asked quietly. He was a little upset to be hearing the news for the first time.

"Summer, after we graduate. I managed to get a scholarship for a university on the other side of the country. I'm moving but my parents are staying here so Nui can go to school here, and Satsuki moved last year when she graduated too." She shared. He quietly let out a breath as he unclenched his hands. He was staying here for college, he got into a good college about an hour from his house.

"Sorry," he heard her say suddenly. Ryuko looked up at him with apologetic eyes. "Sorry, Uzu, that I didn't tell you sooner..." She murmured.

She was actually apologizing.

Uzu merely stared into her blue eyes, unsure of what to do next when he said the first thing that came to his mind.

"I think we can make it work,"

Ryuko looked up at Uzu with questioning eyes as she tucked some of her hair behind her ear. "What?" She asked, slightly confused.

Uzu turned slightly so that he was facing her. "I think we can make it work, a long distance relationship." Ryuko's eyes widened at hearing that, her fair cheeks turning a wonderful shade of red.

Slowly, Uzu removed his hands from his pockets and held Ryuko's smaller hands in his own larger ones. He gave her hands a gentle squeeze as her eyes met his.

"I want you to be my girlfriend, Ryuko," he said, eyes filled with determination.

The dark haired girl stared up at him with wide eyes, her face bright red. She stared at him for a while until she finally smiled at him, a small, shy smile making its way onto her lips.

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He looked down at the letter his mother gave to him this morning. He flipped it over, looking at the address listed on the letter. It wasn't addressed to him, it was actually addressed to Ryuko's parents, but what he was looking at was the sender's address.

Ryuko's address.

As soon as his mother had given this to him, he headed out and hopped onto the first plane he could find. He felt like he needed to see her.

With a deep breath, he took off down the bustling streets to find the apartment complex she was living in. He bumped into numerous people as he headed down the sidewalk, muttering his apologies to anyone he ran into. He almost smirked to himself as he thought of his fiery neighbor who almost fought with anyone who rubbed her the wrong way. The one who sat quietly in the back of the class reading her book or daydreaming, the one who was completely fine having only one or two friends around.

That same girl had moved to a busy, bustling town like this one.

It took him a while to reach his destination, but thanks to a few strangers, he managed to find his way, all the way to her front door. He took a deep breath, his face cold from the weather. His hands were shaking, from nervousness or excitement, he couldn't tell, but maybe it was both.

As one could probably figure out, the long distance didn't work. They had both become too busy with work and school, and with her across the country, it was difficult for her to find the time to make it across the country to visit home.

It had been years since they had seen each other. The last time he saw her was before she moved away. They wrote each other occasionally, but they both realized that it wasn't working so they called it off. Uzu had spent the next few days in his room sulking.

But now he was here, in front of her door step, five years later. He had grown a lot, at least in his opinion. His jaw was a little squarer, his shoulders and chest broader, he was taller too, with toned arms and legs. He had grown some inches from his high school years and he wondered to himself if she had grown as much as he did.

He bit his lip, wondering if she had moved on and found another man to settle down with or if she was still single, like he had been ever since their breakup. The green haired male panicked slightly, wondering to himself if this was a big mistake - if coming to see her was a big mistake.

It had been entirely impulsive on his part. As soon as he had seen her name on that letter, he felt the need to see her.

Was it a mistake?

"Uzu?"

He turned around, his eyes widening from hearing that familiar voice. His eyes widened in awe and disbelief as he immediately recognized the little girl he had met all those years ago the one he took to his tree house and gave his stuffed monkey toy to.

"Ryuko..." He breathed, almost as if he was registering the fact that she was right in front of him.

She didn't look exactly like the little girl he met all those years ago, but she still looked like her, enough for him to recognize her.

Her dark hair was a little longer, just barely brushing the tops of her shoulders. It still looked as soft and silky as he remembers. Her gear - shaped eyes that he remembered so fondly are still that brilliant shade of blue he remembers and her face shows signs of growing up. Her face was slimmer, not in an unhealthy way, but all her baby fat is gone. He immediately noticed the lack of make up on her face. It's much different from the girls he's used to seeing, but he thinks that she looks wonderful nonetheless.

Her body has grown too. She's a little taller, though she is still shorter than him, the top of her head probably reaching to his collarbone. She developed a more feminine look to her; longer legs, a fuller chest, curves in her waist and hips, and a fuller set of lips, he noticed.

She's dressed in a dark blue coat, a long one that grazes just above her knees. He notices the dark jeans that she has on underneath and a pair of white sneakers. A red scarf was wrapped snugly around her neck, and a red slouchy beanie rested on her head, the red streak in her hair just poking out from under her beanie.

"Ryuko..." He breathed again. She quirked her brow at him, adjusting the bag on her shoulder.

"Uzu, what are you doing here?" She asked, her voice taking on a slight tone of disbelief.

Uzu's eyes flicked around, as though trying to find a reasonable answer to her question. Finally, he pulled the letter from his jacket pocket and showed it to her. Her blue eyes glanced between the letter and his face questioningly.

He took a deep breath before answering. "I had to see you." He said, causing her to look up at him again. A huff passed through her lips, giving him a look that told him that she was going

to need a better answer. The dark haired girl placed her hand on her hip as she waited for a better explanation than the one that he had given her.

The green haired male pocketed the letter again and his eyes drift to the floor. He sighed and collected his thoughts before he looked back at her again, determination in his eyes.

Ryuko sucked in a breath, realizing that she had seen that same look somewhere else before.

"I love you, Ryuko." He declared.

The girl's cheeks darkened in color as her eyes widen in surprise. "Uzu..." She breathed. Uzu suppressed the urge to smile at the girl's reaction as he took a step towards her. Ryuko fumbled backward slightly, but Uzu reached out and caught her arm, holding her in place.

His cheeks flush as he rested his forehead against hers. She let out a soft squeak in surprise before breaking eye contact with him. "Ryuko..." He whispered, almost inaudibly. She gulped and closed her eyes, her hands fumbling against his jacket as her fingers clench around the cloth.

"U-Uzu, I-" she gasped as she was cut short, feeling Uzu's lips against hers. They're cold and chapped, but yet they're warm and soft.

Her hands slide up and wrap around his neck, running her fingers through his green hair as she immediately responded to his kiss. She pulled him closer to her, tilting her head to the side as she sighed against their kiss. She whispered his name breathlessly against his lips as he wrapped his arms around her body, holding her against his chest.

They finally part a while later and Uzu grinned down at her breathlessly. "Hi," he chuckled slightly, a smile appearing on his lips. Ryuko giggled lightly in response and tucked her head under her chin, sliding her hands around his back.

She let out a blissful sigh as a smile made its way onto her lips. "Hi,"

FIN.

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